

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEHRAN 12149 080900Z

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 338

INFO AMEMBASSY MUSCAT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T TEHRAN 12149

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR IR MU

SUBJ: IRANIAN HANDLING OF AIRCRAFT SHOOT-DOWN

1. JUST PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE FOR WASHINGTON ON DECEMBER 8, LT. GEN. SAMUEL WILSON, DIRECTOR DIA, AT MY REQUEST APPROACHED GENERAL MOGHADAM, J-2 OF SCS, ON HOW THE GOI WAS PLANNING TO HANDLE THE SHOOT-DOWN OF THE IRANIAN F-4 IN THE PDRY. GENERAL WILSON HURRIEDLY PASSED TO ME VIA THIRD PARTY THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE BASED ON HIS CONVERSATION WITH GENERAL MOGHADAM:

1. THE REASON THE IRANIAN FORCES HAVE NOT TAKEN ARMED ACTION TO DATE WITH RESPECT TO RECOVERY OF AIRCRAFT OR PILOT IS BECAUSE SULTAN QABUS OF OMAN SAID "NO" TO SUCH AN OPERATION.

2. IRAN WILL CONTINUE RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS (PRESUMABLY OVER OMANI TERRITORY) AND WILL ATTEMPT TO USE OTHER COUNTRIES AS INTERMEDIARIES TO PERSUADE SOUTH YEMEN TO RELEASE THE AIRCRAFT AND PILOT. (ACCORDING TO IRANIAN GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT, SEPTTEL, SAUDI ARABIA AND KUWAIT ARE THE INTERMEDIARY COUNTRIES.)

3. IF IT TURNS OUT THAT THE INTERMEDIARIES ARE NOT SUCCESSFUL IN THEIR EFFORTS, SULTAN QABUS HAS AGREED TO THE GOI'S INITIATING A NAVAL OPERATION AGAINST THE PDRY. THE SULTAN HAS ALSO AGREED THAT IF RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS ARE FIRED UPON, THE IRANIANS MAY FIRE BACK.

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2. FURTHER DETAILS MAY BE ACQUIRED FROM GENERAL WILSON WHO

ARRIVES WASHINGTON EVENI G DECEMBER 8. GEN. WILSON HANDLED
THIS INQUIRY WITH CONSIDERABLE SKILL AND FINESSE, AND WE
BELIEVE, BASED ON INFORMATION AVAILABLE, THAT FOREGOING IS
ESSENTIALLY ACCURATE DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT STATE OF PLAY.
NEVERTHELESS, RECOMMEND DETAILS BE CHECKED OUT WITH GENERAL
WILSON.
HELMS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AIRCRAFT OVERFLIGHTS, AIRCRAFT PILOTS, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976TEHRAN12149
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760453-0404
From: TEHRAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761260/aaaacaak.tel
Line Count: 68
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 JUN 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <13 OCT 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: IRANIAN HANDLING OF AIRCRAFT SHOOT-DOWN
TAGS: PFOR, IR, KU, MU, SA, YS, (MOGHADAM)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006